In the Claims:

Please amend claims 1, 3-6, 8, 9, 11, 13-16, 18, 19, 21 and 22; cancel claims 2, 7, 10, 12, 17 and 20; and add new claims 23-32, all as shown below. Applicant reserves the right to prosecute any originally presented or canceled claims in a continuing or future application.

1. (Currently Amended) A collaboration hub for use with a collaboration system for handling messages, comprising:

a [[hub]] transport for receiving messages from participants and sending messages to other participants;

a [[hub]] router [[for]] that validates each message received at the transport and stores the message for delivery by the transport ~~routing messages from a first participant to a second participant~~;

a [[hub]] scheduler ~~for scheduling~~ that schedules the flow of messages ~~between~~ from the transport to the router, and from the [[hub]] router ~~and~~ to the [[hub]] transport;

a ~~conversation~~ manager ~~for managing~~ that manages the flow of messages across components of collaboration hub ~~between participants~~; and,

a repository ~~for storing~~ that stores ~~conversation~~ management data, wherein said management data is used by components of the collaboration hub to handle said messages.

2. (Canceled)

3. (Currently Amended) The collaboration hub of claim [[2]] 1 further comprising ~~wherein said additional component is~~ a decoder ~~for decoding~~ that decodes messages received from said participants, wherein the decoder plugged between the [[hub]] transport [[layer]] and the [[hub]] scheduler.

4. (Currently Amended) The collaboration hub of claim [[2]] 1 further comprising ~~wherein said additional component is~~ an encoder ~~for encoding~~ that encodes messages sent to other participants, wherein the encoder is plugged between the [[hub]] scheduler and the [[hub]] transport [[layer]].

5. (Currently Amended) The collaboration hub of claim [[2]] 1 further comprising ~~wherein said additional component is a messaging~~ router logic plug-ins ~~for routing between participants~~ that determine said other participants to whom messages should be sent, wherein the router logic plug-ins are plugged between the scheduler and the router.

6. (Currently Amended) The collaboration hub of claim [[2]] 1 further comprising ~~wherein said additional component is a messaging filter for filtering message to and from a participant~~ filter logic plug-ins that determine whether to send a message to said other participants, wherein the filter logic plug-ins are plugged in between the router and the scheduler.

7. (Canceled)

8. (Currently Amended) The collaboration hub of claim [[2]] 1 further comprising ~~wherein said additional component is a~~ business logic ~~plugin~~ plug-ins ~~for integrating with a business logic~~ that provide support for messages of various business protocols among ~~used by~~ the ~~participant~~ participants, wherein said business logic plug-ins are plugged in between the scheduler and the router.

9. (Currently Amended) The collaboration hub of claim 8 wherein said business logic ~~plugin is~~ plug-ins include a RosettaNet plug-in.

10. (Canceled)

11. (Currently Amended) A method for transferring messages between participants in a collaboration system, comprising the steps of:

receiving messages via a [[hub]] transport from ~~a first~~ participants and sending messages to ~~a second~~ other ~~participant~~ participants;

validating messages received at the transport by a router;

storing messages by the router for delivery by the transport;

~~routing messages via a hub router from a first participant to a second participant;~~

scheduling the flow of messages ~~between~~ from the transport to the router and further scheduling messages from the [[hub]] router ~~and~~ to the [[hub]] transport;

managing the flow of messages across components of collaboration hub, wherein said components comprise the transport, the router and the scheduler ~~between participants~~; and,

storing ~~conversation~~ management data in a repository, wherein said management data is used by components of the collaboration hub to handle said messages.

12. (Canceled)

13. (Currently Amended) The method of claim [[12]] 11 ~~wherein said additional step includes~~ further comprising the step of decoding messages received from participants by a decoder, wherein the decoder is plugged between the [[hub]] transport [[layer]] and the [[hub]] scheduler.

14. (Currently Amended) The method of claim [[12]] 11 further comprising the step of ~~wherein said additional step includes~~ encoding messages sent to said other participants, wherein the encoder is plugged between the [[hub]] scheduler and the [[hub]] transport [[layer]].

15. (Currently Amended) The method of claim [[12]] 11 further comprising the step of ~~wherein said additional step includes routing~~ determining participants to whom messages ~~between participants~~ should be sent by using router logic plug-ins, wherein router logic plug-ins are plugged between the scheduler and router.

16. (Currently Amended) The method of claim [[12]] 11 further comprising the step of ~~wherein said additional step includes filtering~~ determining whether to send a message ~~messages~~ to ~~and from a~~ said other ~~participant~~ participants by using filter logic plug-ins, wherein said filter logic plug-ins are plugged in between the router and the scheduler.

17. (Canceled)

18. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 11 further comprising the step of providing support for messages of various business protocols ~~processing a business logic for integrating with a business logic used by~~ among ~~the participant~~ participants by using business logic plug-ins, wherein said business logic plug-ins are plugged in between the scheduler and the router.

19. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 18 wherein said ~~processing a business logic processes~~ messages of various business protocols includes a RosettaNet format message.

20. (Canceled)

21. (Currently Amended) A collaboration hub for use with a collaboration system, comprising:

a [[hub]] transport ~~for receiving~~ that receives messages from participants and sending messages to other participants;

a [[hub]] router [[for]] that validates messages received at the transport and storing messages for delivery by the transport ~~routing messages from a first participant to a second participant~~; and

a [[hub]] scheduler ~~for scheduling~~ that schedules the flow of messages from the transport to the router, and from ~~between~~ the [[hub]] router [[and]] to the [[hub]] transport.

22. (Currently Amended) A method for transferring messages between participants in a collaboration system, comprising the steps of:

receiving messages via a [[hub]] transport from ~~a first~~ participants and sending messages to ~~a second~~ other ~~participant~~ participants;

validating messages received at the transport by a router;

storing messages by the router for delivery by the transport; and,

~~routing messages via a hub router from a first participant to a second participant; and~~

scheduling the flow of messages from the transport to the router, and from ~~between~~ the [[hub]] router ~~and~~ to the [[hub]] transport.

23. (New) A collaboration hub according to claim 1 further comprising said manager managing the flow of messages between the transport and participants.

24. (New) A method according to claim 11 further comprising the step of managing the flow of messages between the transport and participants using said manager.

25. (New) A collaboration hub according to claim 1 wherein said messages are transferred among said participants asynchronously.

26. (New) A method according to claim 11 wherein said messages are transferred among said participants asynchronously.

27. (New) A collaboration hub according to claim 1 wherein said transport is configured to receive concurrent messages from participants.

28. (New) A collaboration hub according to claim 1 wherein said transport is configured to send concurrent messages to participants.

29. (New) A method according to claim 11 wherein said transport is configured to receive concurrent messages from participants.

30. (New) A method according to claim 11 wherein said transport is configured to send concurrent messages to participants.

31. (New) A collaboration hub for use with a collaboration system, comprising:

a transport that receives messages from a first participant and sending messages to a second participant;

a router that validates said messages received at the transport and storing said messages for delivery by the transport;

a scheduler that schedules the flow of messages from the transport to the router and, from the router to the transport;

a manager for managing the flow of messages across components of collaboration hub; and,

a repository for storing management data, wherein said management data is used by components of the collaboration hub to handle said messages.

32. (New) A method for transferring messages between participants in a collaboration system, comprising the steps of:

receiving messages via a transport from a first participant and sending messages to a second participant;

validating messages received at the transport by a router;

storing messages by the router for delivery by the transport;

scheduling the flow of messages between the router and the transport;

managing the flow of messages across components of collaboration hub; and,

storing management data in a repository, wherein said management data is used by components of the collaboration hub to handle said messages.